

# DESIGN

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## SHOULD ART BE NATIONALISTIC?

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■ At this stage in the growth of American art, after some fifty years of agitation through the public schools and civic societies, the work of bringing aesthetic life to the attention of the people has been fairly well completed. We may point with some pride to this fact as an achievement brought about in relatively short time through an organized and consistent effort. There is barely a town large enough to boast of a Carnegie Library which does not promote at least something in the way of exhibitions of painting, and in practically every home, there is the consciousness of an art interest abroad in the country, even though there may be no surety as to understanding it. Such a clearly defined movement along with rapid strides made in mechanical and industrial development might tempt one to say that we are making ourselves into an artistic people; that here we have an instance of a group capable of analyzing itself, discovering its shortcomings, laying out a program of action and putting it into effect to say nothing of surveying the accomplishment and tabulating the results. "We have now passed out of the pioneer stage" so one might conclude, "and are existing as a cultured society no longer looking to older civilizations for inspiration and standards of excellence."

Probably never before in the history of the world was such a concerted effort made to carry the enjoyment of art to all the people. The controversy over radical changes in style has abetted the growing interest in such matters, and the widespread determination to acquire culture finds itself growing into an impulse to participate in debate. People are no longer apathetic about what comes and goes in galleries. The average man is highly incensed at the showing of cubism in the town gallery, not ignoring it as something of slight importance, as he might have done in the eighties. It is a matter of concern to him because he may be the purchaser of original paintings himself, and possess a considerable private gallery. These indications of the spreading interest in art are paralleled by an amazing number of art students and by the increasing array of critics and writers on aesthetics. It is true that many of these last undertake the work with inadequate preparation but their number testifies to the great demand for the interpretation of works of art to the public and if their comments are inaccurate, they at least agitate.

Thus there has grown up an art situation of great magnitude, with powerful resources, comparable to other typically American developments, equal to the automobile and the radio in its power to propagate either beauty or ugliness. It should be considered, as are other great forces as a possible agent for either good or evil. As a

factor in culture, its potentialities when well directed appear to be unlimited, but in the hands of false prophets, its capacity for grotesque errors is ghastly. It would be a serious mistake for us to suppose that the expansion of our art societies, growth in schools, and the purchasing of valuable collections, were accompanied necessarily by high standards of excellence. This visible growth in financial power and public recognition, while it affords ample opportunity for growth in appreciation is not in any sense a guaranty of merit. Such manifestation may take place when there is very inferior taste. Many of our recently erected public monuments are pathetic witnesses to this fact, as is much of the recognized painting of the late nineteenth century, even in France where taste should have abounded.

The fact should be recognized that we are now facing a critical point in our national art development because the period of most rapid growth is over and progress hereafter will be less spectacular. The growth of individuals, of towns and counties and of new movements is most obvious in its early stages, and the mature ripening is slower as well as more rare and less discernable. The low level to which we sank in art following the splendid and healthy growth of our Colonial style is a glaring example of how easily we may be led into wretched depravity of taste. We are now certain of our advancement in the possession of the materials of an art-loving people; we likewise know that we have aroused the art consciousness of practically all classes of our population. In the years to come, however, we cannot be so certain as to improvement in understanding and in the production of fine things. Facts and figures will not indicate the amount of excellence as they now show the cost of collections and the number of visitors per day at the public museums.

We are then face to face with a problem of much greater concern than we are usually aware of. The vast resources which are coming to the aid of the art program may be expended either in wisdom or in folly. If action be ill-advised, the error may not be discovered for half a century and its correction be accomplished with difficulty. The will to leadership may easily lead us into the folly of framing our judgments to conform to our output, by which process producer and consumer are kept in a state of contentment. A tragic situation to imagine would be brought about by a body of flattering critics paying homage to a circle of contented and mediocre artists, both groups supported by a proud and uninstructed clientele. From such a vicious circle may our generation be spared!

### II

In this period of great potentialities and of grave possibility of error, our strongest safeguard will be found to be in the maintenance of wide contacts in the art world

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## SYMBOLIC GODS IN ART OF MANY COUNTRIES

BY BLANCHE NAYLOR

### Friendly Deities of Many Countries Make Universal Decorative Motifs

Above--A scene showing a contest of  
sirens and muses used as a sarcoph-  
agus panel in the Second Century A. D.

- From very ancient times the people of every land have incorporated images of their favorite deities in the designs used for decorative friezes, units and groups in all of their arts, whether pictile or glyptic.

The first notable display of such symbolic gods in national art was in the days of early Greece, when polytheism ruled and whole pantheons of idols appeared in gala array upon ceramics, bronze, gold, silver urns and vases, and formed passing parades upon wooden or plaster panels for the decoration of public buildings as well as in smaller objects for the adornment of homes and temples.

These early panoramas have made very definite impressions upon the development of every craft in every country and, no matter how differently each group of artisans has evolved its ideas, the influence of that time and its mode are still felt strongly. Zeus, or Jupiter or Jove, king of the gods, was for long years an ever present figure, pictured reigning over Olympus, the home of all the higher deities. Mercury, the winged runner, has been apotheosized in various lands, under varying names, but with the same characteristics and general appearance. His well proportioned, graceful frame has adorned artwares throughout the world. Some of the ancient heroes became minor gods, such as Hercules, somewhat in the manner in which the latter-day saints have been evolved.

Goddesses have also had their place in the worship and decoration of many countries. Common to almost every land has been some version of Venus, or Athena, an interceder for the people with the gods, and consequently a very popular female. One of her first incarnations was depicted upon the top of the far famed Parthenon originally, in which sculpture she was known as Pallas Athene, and was placed upon a pale blue pedestal so that from below it seemed that she hovered con-

tinually in the rare atmosphere above the city of Athens. Isis was to Egypt what Athena was to the Athenians, and her cognomen was transmitted into Ishtar in ancient Babylonia.

In Greece also, two other favorites appear upon widely differing media. They are Apollo, the young and handsome arrow god, and Diana, the huntress, or Artemis, the feminine incarnation of the same spirit. Both add to the objects which they grace with their portraits an air of eternal youth and agility. Each Greek god had his own particular pet animals and birds, and one infallible way of distinguishing the various individuals is through the background filled with these accompanying animals.

The aegis, or awful shield of Zeus frequently appears as part of the otherwise gentle Athena's costume. She is sometimes pictured as "owl-headed" and is then known as the patron goddess of manhood, and presumably of wisdom, not always a possession of the masculine element.

In India the demi-god Krishna and his mistress Radha appear frequently upon metal castings, wood carvings, sculptured stone and the more elaborate ceramic efforts. Armlets and bracelets carry figures of various lower gods



This charming statuette from Crete is the familiar snake goddess in faience. Found at Knossus and dates back to 1800 B. C. It is now in the Metropolitan Museum



Fresco Painting of "Kuan Yin"  
of the Sung dynasty, 960-1279  
A. D. Beautifully composed  
with a rare use of line and  
a charming use of tone quality

in relief. Bishnu also is much used. India, too, has its inferior deities of whom the natives grow fond. Many of the Hindu tribes carry portraits of the best loved god or goddess about with them as small amulets or bits of jewelry. Agni, god of fire, is usually depicted riding upon a ram. There are many animal goddesses of destruction, notably Kali, from which cognomen comes the name of the city of Calcutta, "Khali-Ghat" city of Kali, the war goddess.

In the old Pyrenees district of Europe the Celtic goddesses seem to have roamed not alone in fancy but also in pictured versions upon many art works. "Niskas," nixies, or water sprites are often seen as jolly little embellishments upon various pottery pieces. In Gaul, south of Lyons, groups of goddesses called the "hill mothers" were once worshipped and depicted in many ways, together with several individual goddesses closely associated with patron gods, the former called the "home mothers." A god appropriately called the "Boiler" was said to preside over certain hot springs in the district, and was a bringer of health to all who believed in him. The river Dee, in England and Wales, has a title taken from the Welsh word meaning simply "the goddess." This river with its attendant sprite is often pictured upon old weavings and embroideries. There was also a goddess of speech, (feminine of course) and one of storage or of the harvest.

The dryads and hamadryads of old England are used as graphic decorations upon many old potteries. The Scandinavian Thor, god of thunder, and Woden, god of war, are familiar to all lovers of Norse work. Of the many village goddesses in India, the prevalent legend for the forest mother is that all passersby must add a stick or a stone to her shrine. Upon an old Greek vase a sprite similar to Hindu ones is pictured. A satyr beats the ground in the spring to awaken Mother Earth.

From early times artists and creators of both utilitarian and decorative objects have exerted their skill with the in-

tention of producing not merely objects pleasing to the eye but at the same time useful by employing emblems which convey a definite meaning. Particularly in China and Japan is this true, where almost every fragile vase carries a whole legend, or an entire story, upon its pictured surface.

Bronze vessels and bells, assigned to the time of the Shang and Chou dynasties, B.C. 1766 to 249, are representative of their primitive art unmodified by outside influences, and these carry scenes expressing sages' reasoning and wisemen's parables. Carved fragments of bone and tortoise shell, found lately in the vicinity of Honan, also carry highly interesting designs built up from gods and their surroundings. The cloud and thunder pattern is the background most frequently seen in the older Chinese work, and the animal gods common to many countries are depicted here also. Since rain was so essential to their very existence this pattern of cloud and storm became a desirable one to possess as a talisman of better times. One of the old Chinese philosophers interprets the meaning of the traditional dragon motif by saying that it is a restraining influence against the sins of greed and gluttony which the Chinese consider the worst of the vices. Lozenge-shaped spaces are usually filled with intricate elaborations of cloud and thunder pattern and, in Chinese art, dragons have appeared from time immemorial, either depicted in conventional forms or in terrifying realistic effects. "Gluttony," so much to be avoided, also stands for sensuality and avarice.

The fish scale pattern is used in many old cauldrons in conjunction with the early gods. The recumbent silk-worm is also often seen as a background for one god or another. The tortoise, tiger and leopard are much used as accompanying motifs for the gods' figures. Other figures used with the five hundred varying gods were the sun, moon, stars, mountain, dragon, flowery fowl, and flame patterns. The azure dragon means east; the vermillion bird, the chinese phoenix, south; the white tiger, west; and the black

warrior or tortoise, north. A circular figure which equals the "Great Ultimate Principle" or "Source of Existence" is much used, also. Greco-Indian and Persian elements are often mixed with original, native decoration. The Chinese "lucky" emblems most frequently employed for special occasions are: first, canopy, an attribute of royalty; second, state umbrella, meaning high rank; third, endless knot, meaning longevity; fourth, conch shell, the insignia of royalty; fifth, sacred lotus, relic jar and pair of fish, a combination indicating death and the mating season.

The famous eight immortals were also favorite themes. Their emblems were a pair of castanets, a crutch, a pilgrim's gourd, a magic sword, a fan, a bamboo tube and rods, a flute, and a basket of flowers. The stork is credited with powers of long life and is the aerial messenger of Taoist deities.

It has been said that the animal group was borrowed from the Turks. The zodiac, with its variations, is common to almost all nations. The Chinese interpretation includes the dragon, hare, tiger, fox, rat, pig, dog, cock, monkey, goat, horse and snake. Every Chinaman knows very definitely under which sign he was born and has learned that any important step throughout his life must be taken under the auspices of this animal. The man whose sign is the dragon, must have a difficult time creating an illusion of anything similar to his patron animal.

Fabulous and imaginary animals, such as the dragon, phoenix, unicorn and tortoise, are commonly used in the decorations of the land. The dragon may be identified with the alligator combining the idea with his emergence in the Spring season of rain and flood. The tiger symbolizes military prowess. The conventionalized lion of India, a snarly monster with shaggy mane and wild curls, is often seen at the entrance of temples and other buildings. Flowers of the four seasons, used in wooden carvings, are the tree peony which is similar to the magnolia, symbolizing Spring; the lotus, Summer; the chrysanthemum, Autumn; and the wild plum, Winter. Many other "marvelous objects of god augury" are used.

The various signs are used especially for conveying from generation to generation the philosophers' phrases, in a sort of rebus form. Consequently a group composed of magnolia, cherry, apple, and tree peony probably means "May you dwell in jade halls and enjoy wealth and honor." A luxuriant growth of lotus suggests "May you follow the road that leads to continuous promotion." Eight precious things frequently represented are the jewel, cash, lozenge, pair of books, painting, a musical stone, pair of horn bugs and a leaf. Coral typifies longevity, and a peacock's feather official rank.

In England one of the most friendly of deities has always been pictured in song, story, and fictile form,—St. George, patron saint of protection, and dragon killer extraordinary. This courageous soul has appeared upon many "story-telling" or fictile vases, and in other fields of artware. A singularly undemonstrative nation, this one favorite legend has nevertheless been taken to the heart of the British, and every schoolboy and girl knows the tale in its entirety. (Incidentally, Japan also has a "St. George," known by a different name, and gaining his purpose by slightly different, less dignified, but more amusing means. The Oriental version will be recorded further along in these pages.)

Back to the classic days of Greece, aside from this one exception, the English have most frequently gone for their decorative ideas, in the realm of the gods, and with good effect, too, as may be witnessed in their reproductions of



This magnificent Buddha shows how this god inspired the Chinese to create some of the world's most beautifully decorative sculpture



**Chinese goddess of everlasting mercy  
K'ang Hsi period, 1662-1722. An inspiration for artists of the Western World who can learn much from the orientals**

Etruscan work. Wedgewood, and many others of the famous artist-industrialists of the little isle, has found inspiration in the graceful, lithe forms of old Greece.

In tapestries, rugs, needlework and embroidery, all through the ages, the symbolic gods have been well represented. Large tapestries particularly favored the picturing of a familiar legendary figure surrounded by the Lares and Penates ascribed to him, or seen in some moralistic series of scenes. One of the most famous of these, the story of the Emperor Augustus and the Tiburtine Sibyl, is now in the collection of Pierpont Morgan. It is one part of a triptych, the entire composition being done in gold and silver threads delicately wrought.

There is a "god shelf" in every Japanese household, usually in the kitchen, where the seven household gods are perched and where they may be invoked for assistance while preparing the morning, noon or evening rice.

Very especial meaning is given to the art motifs of Japan by the use of symbolic gods and their accompanying effects. The accoutrements themselves are often depended upon for decoration, as a subtle means of conveying the idea that the god himself or herself lurks in the background, unseen but ever watching. The many symbols of the land of the rising sun are a species of glimpses into the life of the past from which the early historical associations have come down, bringing with them the thoughts and feelings of people long since departed, but whose conceptions still influence, to a great extent, the life of their descendants.

The numerous deities connected with Shintoism and Buddhism hold an exceedingly important place in Japanese art. The national religion in Shintoism which has for its chief objects of worship the mirror, the sword and the crystal ball. Upon the simple shrines of this sect very little elaboration is to be found, and they are strikingly contrasted with the oriental splendor of the Buddhist places of worship, which depend largely upon sumptuous decorations for their final effect.

The most outstanding Buddhistic emblems are the wheel, the rosary, the lotus flower, the incense burner, the fan, bow and arrow, goad or spear, the rope, the axe, the cup of sacrifice, the hare and the moon, the medicine bottle and the specially made vases for shrines. There are, too, the important branch of the willow tree, the crystal ball, the sacred fungus, and the mallet, called the hammer of happiness,—a condition which is said to be brought about through much hard work.

A very popular and nationally known deity is the children's god, called "Jizo" who is much more frequently seen in many interpretations than any of his brothers. He is depicted as a very beautiful young boy, smiling with infinite love and supreme gentleness. The sleeves of his robe are invariably shown to be of extreme length so that they may offer a haven and a hiding place to frightened children. The roadsides of Japan are filled with little niches in which Jizo is seen holding forth beneficent hands, for he is also the patron saint of travelers. So common in his own land, this charming little god is also seen upon the colorful lacquer work, the silken embroideries, and often carefully portrayed in cloisonné, which goes to countries whose customs are far removed from his own.

There is also to be seen upon Japanese products the god "Monju," who is the special helper of those who seek wisdom, and of all students. He reads incessantly, in his pictured character, from a little book in his left hand, which is of the type of the old Indian palm leaf manuscript, tied about with string. The right hand holds the sword of knowledge.

in silent pledge of cleaving the clouds of mental darkness and dissipating the depths of ignorance.

A bit of more terrifying and more dramatic in effect is the picturization upon many bits of ceramic art of the god "Siva," armed with lightning and thunderbolts, riding on the whirlwind and directing the storm.

The seven household gods which have been mentioned and which are so necessary to the proper conduction of any home might more accurately be called patron saints. Representations of these are found in the most humble homes as well as in the most elegant. They are characterized as follows: First, the tall headed sage, the god of long life and knowledge, whose head is so elongated in order to contain the wisdom of the world. Second, the god with mallet and rice bales who presides over all earthly prosperity, and so is a most necessary deity with whom to keep in favor. Third, the symbolic fisherman who provides sustenance for the working man. Fourth, the bringer of contentment. Fifth, the warrior, to protect the land. Sixth, the one feminine member of the group who quite logically governs matrimonial affections. Seventh, the helper and aid of striving ones who incessantly study and yearn for higher things.

The sense of high humor so inherent in many Japanese



Above--Etruscan mirror, Fourth and Third Century, B. C., with a design of Juno and Herakles

Left--Statue of Brahma, Tenth Century, Albright Gallery

things appears frequently in the artistic treatment of the abnormally tall head of the god of wisdom. The native artists through many centuries have taken many liberties with this figure, and have sometimes liberally endowed the celebrated head with many extra bumps of knowledge. Occasionally an even more daring craftsman has depicted a large mosquito annoyingly above this inaccessible top piece, and still others have carefully placed ladders reaching to the top of this mountain of knowledge!

Another famous and much pictured god is named Susano-o, brother of the Sun goddess whom he forced to retire into a cave and so caused darkness to fall upon the world. An additional accomplishment of his, a more pleasant one, was to protect a fair maiden from an eight-headed serpent. This he did by the very simple process of giving the monster eight tubs of "sake," one for each head, until it became so intoxicated that he had no trouble in separating each of the heads from its body. This delightfully romantic scene is often to be found upon the products of Japanese craftsmen in various arts.

Then there is the laughing goddess Uzumè, she who enticed the aforesaid sun goddess out of her cave by performing a lovely dance, and thus restoring sunshine to the darkened world. Her face is a familiar one upon many objects in ceramic, lacquer, enamel, woodcarvings and other decorative art of the eastern country. With its narrow forehead, black imperial patches high above the eyes, straight black hair, gaily chubby cheeks, and laughing impudent expres-



Above--Greek Mirror of the Fourteenth Century B. C. portraying Aphrodite, the goddess of love, with Eros

Right--An Egyptian goddess

sion, she is a favorite with her own people and with foreigners. Famous artists have used her as a subject for much of their best work, since her story lends itself to beautiful interpretations.

Prosperity in Japan is often signified by bales of rice, since all the wealth of old Japan was counted by the possession of this foodstuff, and these adjuncts of the national household god of comfort appear in many ways.

There is one group of symbols with which the Western world has long been familiar. Inseparably connected with Koshu, the god of philosophy, is the ape or the three "Mystic Monkeys" which have come to be well known in this land. When next we see the little row of three brown figures seated close together and silently preaching a lesson in good living, we will know that they are "Misaru," the blind monkey, who covers his eyes with his paws so that he may see no evil, "Kika-saru," the deaf monkey, who covers his ears and will hear no evil, and "Iwa-saru," the dumb one who covers his mouth and will speak no evil. This trio of clever little animals is seen everywhere; carved on stone seats along the roadsides, in the homes of Japan, and they have become very popular elsewhere as little ornaments which point a moral to be followed to advantage. In little ivory, wood or composition statue effect they sit calmly in the homes of many countries.

A son of one of the old Mikados is pictured as a hermit who lived solely upon the dew gathered from chrysanthemum petals. One imagines that he surely must have been

superhuman to have subsisted upon such an unsubstantial diet, although it is a charming thought. Lao Tsu, who founded Taoism, is described as a superior man who preferred obscurity to a life of public deeds, and he is frequently pictured in hidden corners of the earth where he could escape the rush of the world and contemplate deeply, undisturbed, the more important things of life. He is intended to point an example to the social butterflies of the world.

A legend which is told of Daruma is associated with the supernatural origin of the tea plant. Once during meditation, he fell asleep, and upon awaking was so ashamed of his lapse and so filled with self contempt that he took his knife and chipped off his guilty sleep-heavy eyelids and cast them from him. They took root where they fell and from them sprang the wondrous tea plant, the leaves of which are still believed to have a magic quality of driving sleep from weary eyes. And so it was that the beverage came to be valued by holy men and subsequently used by the commoner. Daruma is also sometimes shown upon ceramic vessels carrying out the legend that he was seen, three years after his death and ceremonious burial, traveling toward India carrying one shoe in his hand. Upon hearing this, the Emperor commanded that his tomb be opened and it was found empty save for one shoe!

The Japanese are perhaps the most symbol loving of all nationalities. Our well-known phrase "when my ship comes in" is probably based upon the Japanese belief in a vision being vouchsafed to them on New Year's day, which is for them the second day of the new calendar year, at which time





An Indian Miniature  
of the Eighteenth  
Century with Krishna  
as the central figure

they place under their pillows slips of paper with a picture of "a ship of good fortune," and hope that a pleasant dream will disclose all the good luck which will be theirs in the year to come. This belief is somewhat like our old Hallowe'en celebrations, when we expect weird happenings. Dreams have always been considered important omens, and in case one has a bad dream at this New Year's ceremony he must write upon the bit of paper an entire recounting of the dream, placing this in a small boat which is then set adrift. From this followed the new idea that the ship which went away with bad luck would return laden with good things. On the sail of the ship of treasure is to be seen the picture of a tapir, an animal which is said to devour all evil things.

The famous emblems of good fortune date back to the Sixteenth Century when, during two hundred and fifty years of peace, the people built up their civilization and developed such refinements as their elaborate tea ceremonies, schools of floral arrangement, and various other social rules. The good things of life, much to be desired, are listed as follows, and may be seen upon weavings, potteries, and other handcrafts. 1. The anchor, for safety and hope. 2. The cowry shell, which was once used as money, thus symbolizing wealth. 3. Zeni, or corn, representing moderate comfort. 4. Coins in a chest, obviously meaning plenty. 5. A weight, symbolic of honest commerce. 6. A purse, also picturing a sufficiency of worldly goods. 7. Key to the storehouse in which priceless art treasures are kept. 8. A jar containing sacred pearls, coral, and precious stones. (The storehouse and such little banks as bowls and jars are much used by the natives because of the inflammability of Japanese buildings.) 9. The harp, implying harmony. 10. The clove, which is used as a perfume, and is indicative of sanitation and health.

Consequently, when next you see these symbols of various good things pictured in Japanese work, the meaning of a seemingly reasonless group of objects will be recognized and may be easily interpreted and explained. In addition to these

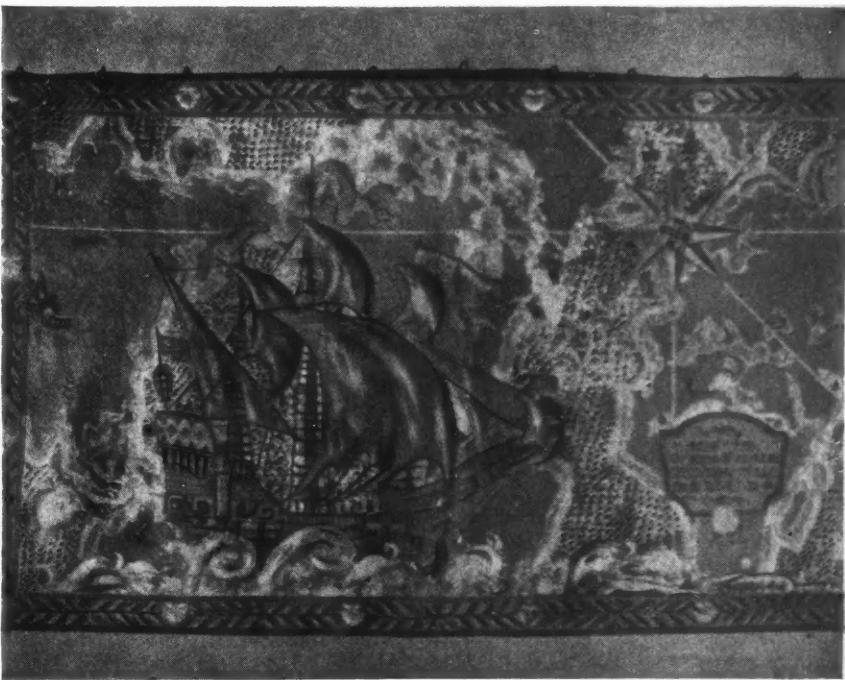
there is the "Shippo," or collection of seven especially precious things: gold, silver, coral, crystal, agate, tortoise shell and amber. To the Japanese these seven precious things are like the seven colors of the spectrum and the seven separate notes of music, by which means the glorious arts of the world may be conveyed to those who love them. The native term for enamel of all kinds is also "shippo," implying that they consider it a particularly valuable creation.

The many singularly hook-like ornaments which embellish much of the Japanese work have been evolved by this quaint nation from the original idea of surrounding objects and people with such sharp weapons for the purpose of preventing the escape of the soul therefrom.

Little statues made for their inherent decorative properties alone are used in both China and India, together with separate figures of animals which were worshipped by the modern Orient's ancestors. Small groups of congenial sages are cut in stone in realistic fashion. Frequently these are made in most elaborate fashion, standing in the midst of thick foliage, or ranged upon carved rocks. Soapstone and jade are used extensively for many of these. Pagodas and little shrines offer havens to contain the sacred figures. There are many so-called "little gods" in China which are closer to the common people than the more dignified and fearsome ones. They are invariably friendly souls, and their jocund, rotund faces give forth a cheery greeting to all who look upon them.

All of the more apt philosophers have stated that man in general needs something to worship, and if that something is beautiful, as by its very nature it must be, then the purposes of its existence are served twofold.

Many of the most enduring and permanently acceptable forms of decoration have been inspired by the idealized visions of the denizens of mythology and their domain, and the realm of art consequently owes much to the symbolic gods.



TOOLED LEATHER CHEST AND DECORATIVE WALL PANEL  
IN TOOLED LEATHER BY DONN JEFFERSON SHEETS

JULY-AUGUST

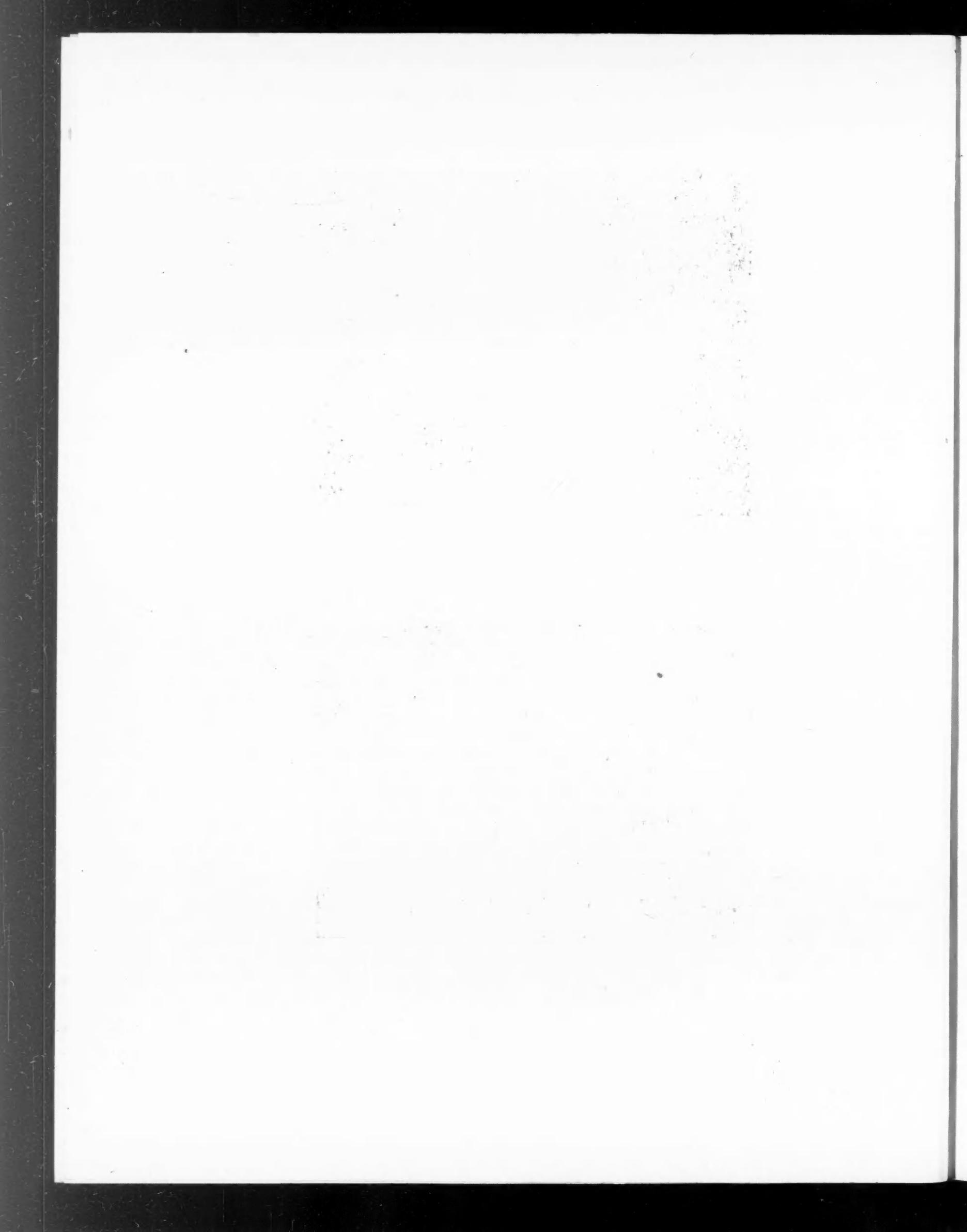
1930

Supplement to  
DESIGN

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KERAMIC STUDIO PUB. CO.

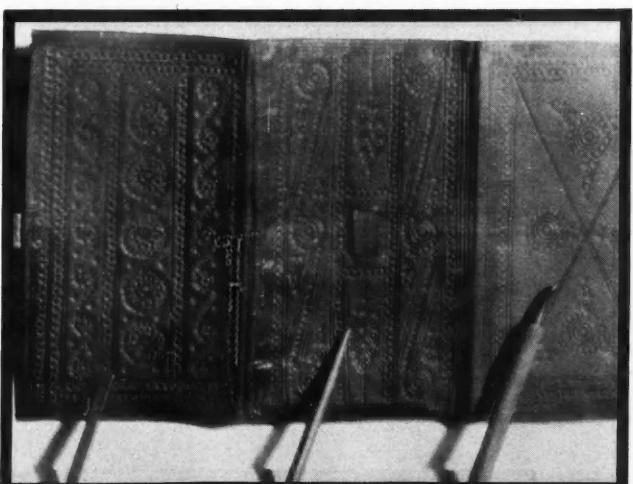
SYRACUSE, NEW YORK



# A LESSON IN LEATHER WORKING . .

## Steps in the Process

- Apply design by tracing with carbon paper or with soft pencil. Thoroughly wet the leather on both sides by sponging to the saturation point.
- Work leather on marble or stone slab or hard, smooth wood. Outline the entire design with lining tool to protect the pattern.
- Depressed areas should be firmly pushed down with a flat surfaced tool. Outline the design with fine or blunt tool, according to width of line desired.
- Backgrounds or borders may be filled in with repeat or all-over small designs made by using small metal stamps. They should be hammered lightly but firmly.
- Wet leather is very sensitive and may be badly scarred with finger nails or any hard objects which touch it. Simple, natural finish may be obtained by waxing and polishing. Different areas may be colored with dyes or oil paint. Dyes containing acid deteriorate the leather. An under coat of thin shellac cut with alcohol should be used before any paints are applied. Thick shellac or varnish are not desirable on any object that may be bent, as they crack easily.



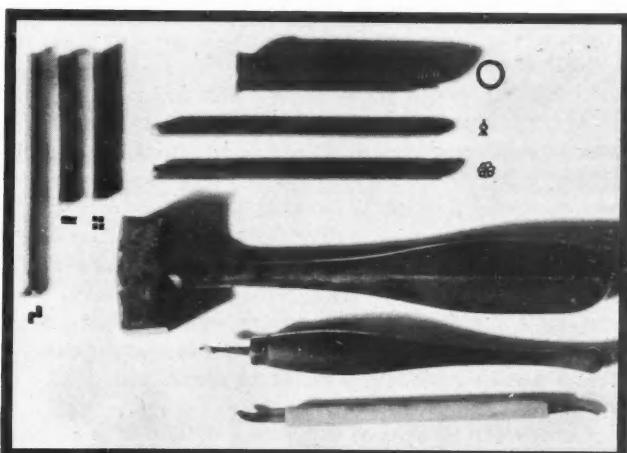
A finished piece of tooled leather showing the kind of tools used

FOR JULY-AUGUST



The leather tooling process showing marble slab and tools in working

Below -- Some designs made with simple stamping tools . . .



Some of the typical tools used in leatherwork. For simple pieces only the two lower ones are necessary

- Only unfinished leather should be used—either calfskin, sheepskin or various cowhide. English steerhide provides the most interesting natural grained, heavy leather for large objects.
- Most metals other than brass stain the leather if allowed to remain in contact with damp. Both lining and stamping tools should be heated over a small alcohol burner—not hot enough to scorch. A firm, definite touch rather than going over, is essential. An ingenious workman may devise many simple tools by filing and hammering simple objects like nails, picks, brass tubes of various kinds.
- The leather pieces may be laced together with leather thongs or sewed with long stitches on a sewing machine to prevent cutting.

## SHOULD ART BE NATIONALISTIC?

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abroad. Such a program is not without opposition, for one hears loud protests against foreign influence. The old admonition to cultivate the provincial soil and to shun strange associates is heard with renewed intensity. But the fallacy of an exclusion policy is obvious, when the development of the great schools of the past is considered. Art history is built up largely on the conception of the various influences of one school on another and no censure is held out for any group because the marks of a foreign style are conspicuous, and these marks are frequently clear in the most original style. Let us notice several instances.

Venetian painting is the most distinctive and spontaneous in Italy, and the infusion of the qualities of the Orient detracts nothing from its glory. The traces of Oriental characters in Greek art seem to have contributed to an exceptionally rapid rise. In French painting of the nineteenth century is to be found one of the most remarkable examples of progress in all history, and the study of foreign schools was extensive and varied. Poussin and Claude, living abroad for extended periods, and Manet, gathering inspiration from the Spanish and the Japanese, illustrate the fact that throughout French history there has been the greatest readiness to absorb outside influences.

There are to be sure certain cases in history which might lead one to believe that a national art develops most successfully if the frontier lines of the art world are sharply marked. Negro art of the Congo lost its virility when European culture began to invade the Dark Continent after the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries. Before that time their sculpture ran true to the original type and was characterized by such excellence as to arouse the admiration and study of modern artists in every country. France again took the lead in borrowing or at least drawing inspiration from the new source. But the fact that this remarkable art of the negro was built up in seclusion from the rest of the world is no clue to the program to be followed by a highly civilized country today. Negro art remains primitive and lacks those elements that belong to an art that has an intellectual factor in it and is understood as well as felt.

A study of the lives of individual artists with regard to the effect of foreign study reveals the fact that the great names in history are divided in respect to the breadth of their influences. There are those who by nature were individualists and seem to have acquired their style inevitably and in complete immutable form. William Blake was of this type. One cannot conceive of his having evolved such a manner of working by studying with other artists. Michelangelo is another whose personality was distinctive although the masters whom he had in his formative periods left the traces of their styles on his work. He could not have been carried far off his natural course, however, by any of his older associates. He sacrificed nothing of his own personality in his study of Signorelli. He simply realized his own individuality more rapidly. Raphael in the matter of the rapid absorption of varying styles defies comparison and, depending on the evaluation which one puts on his work, might be cited as an example of either the benefits or the evils of a wide range of collaborators. Such cases are not cited in support of more ecclesiasticism in the sense of indiscriminate borrowing, but to show that the union of varying styles may result in an original creation different from either of the components. Consider El

Greco's legacy to art! He had been apprenticed to the Venetians but he created an original style of painting.

In later times interchanges between countries and schools has been facilitated and practiced freely. No less an intrepid venturer than Delacroix in the nineteenth century, upon sight of a picture by Constable immediately assumed the practice of the style in which the painting was done. Thereby the development of French painting was advanced materially and the expression of French genius was not in the least checked. Cezanne, it is true, decided to retire to Aix to work in seclusion for the sake of the freer exercise of his personal bent and this no doubt was largely responsible for his vast contribution to modern art. This period, however, followed wide experiences and familiarity with varied styles. It is certain that he did not always look within himself for inspiration. It is reported that as a student, he once deliberately copied a work by a fellow pupil in the academy.

Among the prominent names in the history of American painting there is much variation in the amount of foreign instruction received. Whistler and Sargent were completely trained in the European schools while Inness and Homer were contented with occasional visits to foreign art centers. As to the wisdom of the two methods there is much difference of opinion but if the last two retained more of native flavor, they were on the other hand far less advanced in versatility and in the fundamentals of their craft. Even though he did not study abroad, Inness was no less colored by Europe than his compatriots for if his landscapes are unlike those of the French Barbizon painters, it is in their thinness and superficiality. Inness travelled in France studying the work of the Fontainebleau group but he did not put himself in a position to acquire the good foundation in the fundamentals of painting, which those men had and which could not be gained merely by observing their work or even the work of the old masters. No amount of loyalty should allow us to believe that we see in the landscapes of Inness more than a faint suggestion of the true realism and strength that place the pictures of Constable, Millet, or Corot among the world's masterpieces. England's great landscape painter, Constable, was probably right when he said that "a self-trained artist always has an ignorant instructor."

### III

Most of the protests against foreign study are based on a misconception of the manner in which creative originality comes about. The argument for focusing the attention on the preservation of native qualities is a popular one and it has a convincing note, but when one peers into it in the light of theory and practical experience its fallacies are apparent and the fact is evident that serious harm may be done when powerful influences are brought to bear on its support.

Racial and natural styles in art, like originality in individual effort, are enhanced not by narrowing the range of contacts but by expanding it. The matter involves more than is suggested by the popular phrase "being one's self," because the self is most likely to be original when it has been acted upon by the greatest number of experiences, provided that it has had any potentialities in the beginning. Those who favor retiring within our own borders to wait brooding for genius to manifest itself appear to be ignorant of the complications that impede self-expression in any serious form of art, not realizing the great difficulty with

Continued on Page 68

## TWO EMBROIDERED COATS

Illustrations showing how two attractive coats were made of barred curtain material or net with wool yarn by students of Laura DeVinney, Normal School, Fredonia, N. Y.



■ The coat above was made on darning net with blue, green and orange wool yarn and lined with white crepe. It is worn over a white crepe dress. The coat on the left was made on barred curtain material embroidered in three values of green yarn. It was lined with green crepe and worn over a green crepe dress. In carrying out the project the darning net was first cut allowing one inch on each side of the coat pattern after which a line was basted or drawn around the exact size of the pattern. The designs were carefully worked out on squared paper with crayons and planned to fit the coat, starting in the middle of the coat and working towards the outside so that the parts of the motifs would be even on each seam. All embroidery was kept inside of the coat outline. The results are colorful, attractive and practical. As a means of relating art to the problems of life this problem is highly recommended.



Plates designed by the class of Miss Alice Rosenblatt, James Monroe High School, New York City. American Indian symbols were used as motifs. The eagle and thunderbird motifs are well suited to this problem. Pleasing arrangements in simple fundamental shapes with heavy dark masses gives these designs a distinction and carrying power quite desirable in the work of high school pupils and the beginning designers

## A PROBLEM IN PLATE DESIGNS

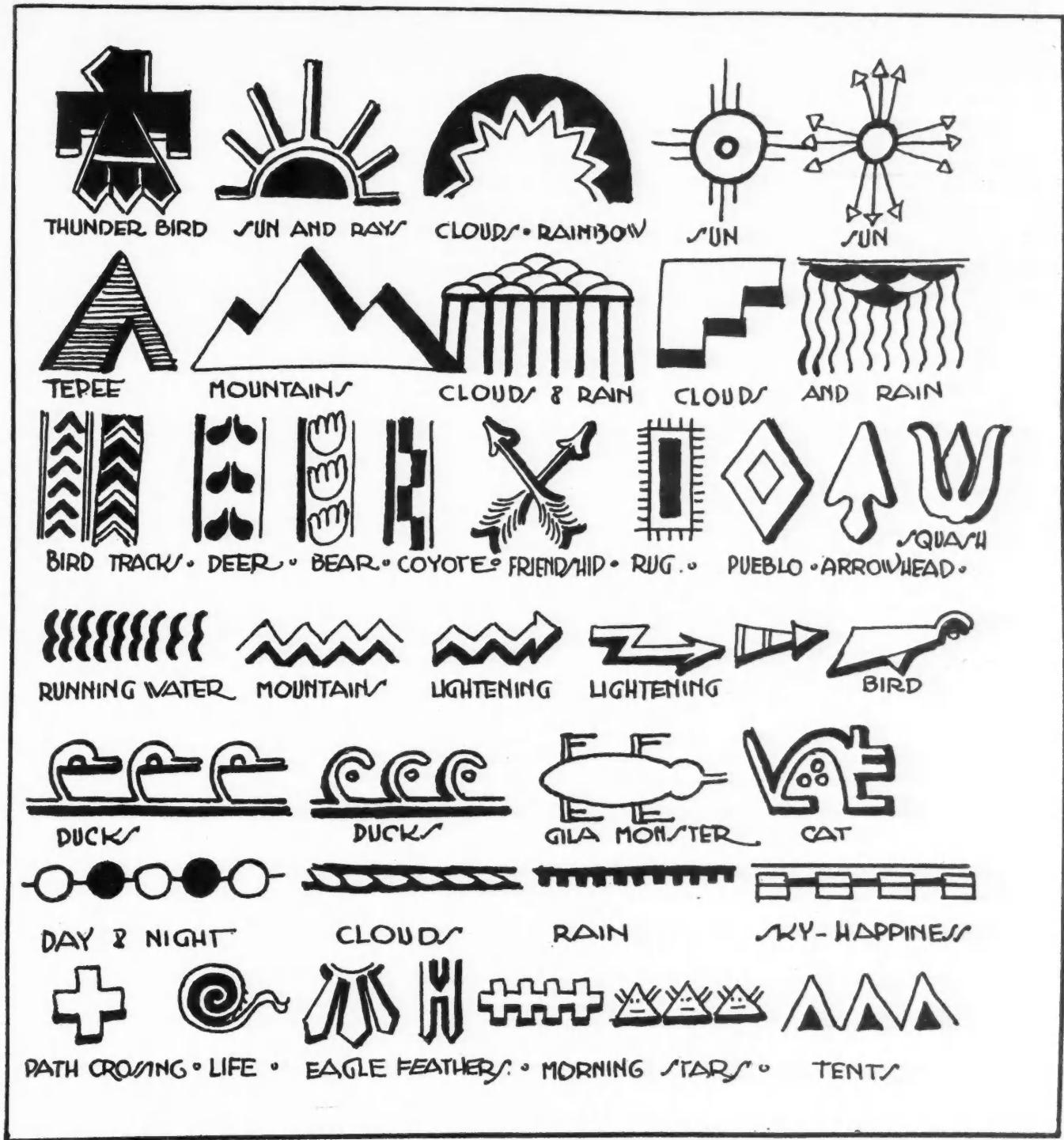
■ In the four plates reproduced above is suggested an excellent project in design for high school pupils. There are involved many smaller problems such as filling the circle in a pleasing way so that there is a pleasing relation of masses and value without the result of too much whirling as is often the case. Then there is the border which must be kept in proper relation to the large circle as well as keeping the eye moving in pleasant rhythm around the edge of the plate.

Indian motifs such as those reproduced in the April issue of DESIGN are particularly fine for beginning students and young designers for they have the very necessary quality of simple spacing and fine use of geometric areas.

In carrying out these designs paper plates were used and the design was applied directly so that the students were working in very much the same manner as the professional designer of dinner ware. The design in this

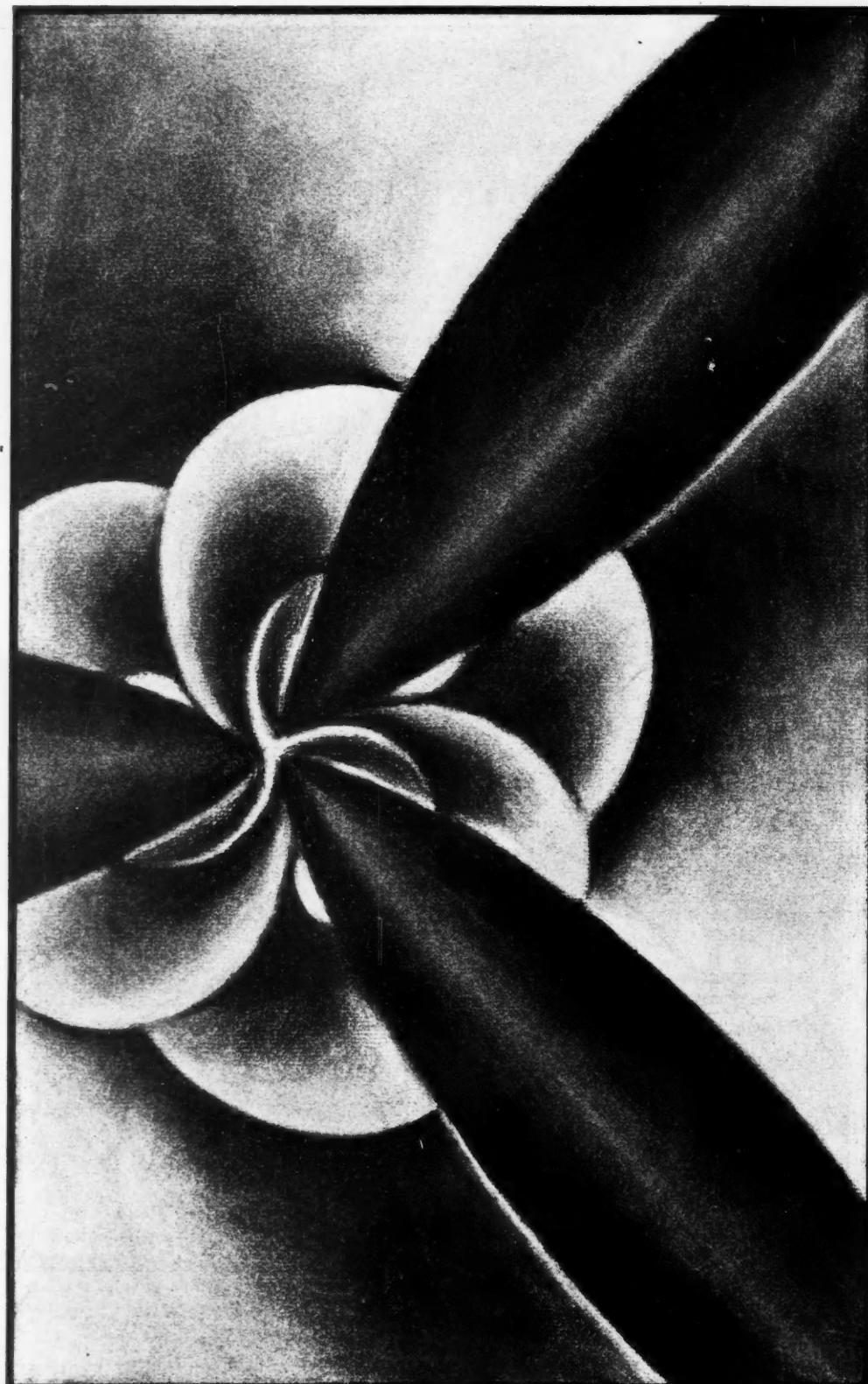
case were applied with India ink but tempera paint could be used if color is desired. Many interesting arrangements can be tried using either the conservative restrained borders and central medallion or on the other hand modern designs using bands cutting across the circle with geometric units pleasantly, yet informally placed.

In working for good black and white arrangement it is best to outline the design using a lettering pen with a round tip (a medium size is best) after the design has been outlined, large dark areas can be filled in with a brush, always avoiding the pitfall of filling in only small spots with black which results in a cut-up effect. In the plate which is reproduced in the upper left corner of this page there is a very fine arrangement of darks and lights, as well as an excellent repetition of curved and oblique lines all joining to produce a feeling of unity in the round plate design.



Symbolic American Indian motifs used by students making the plate designs on the opposite page. Units of this kind offer the best material for the student as well as the professional designer or decorator. Their very simplified shapes and economy of line makes for dynamic strength

To place an extremely simple plant form in a space with as pleasing a relationship of forms and planes as is shown here demands extreme restraint



## A FLOWER COMPOSITION IN THREE DIMENSIONAL DESIGNS BY EARNEST WRIGHT

A figure sculptur-esque in its relation of form, boldly, yet beautifully placed in a rectangular composition with a marked rhythm in line and mass with opposition



## A FIGURE DONE IN SIMPLE FORM

BY EARNEST WRIGHT

FOR JULY-AUGUST

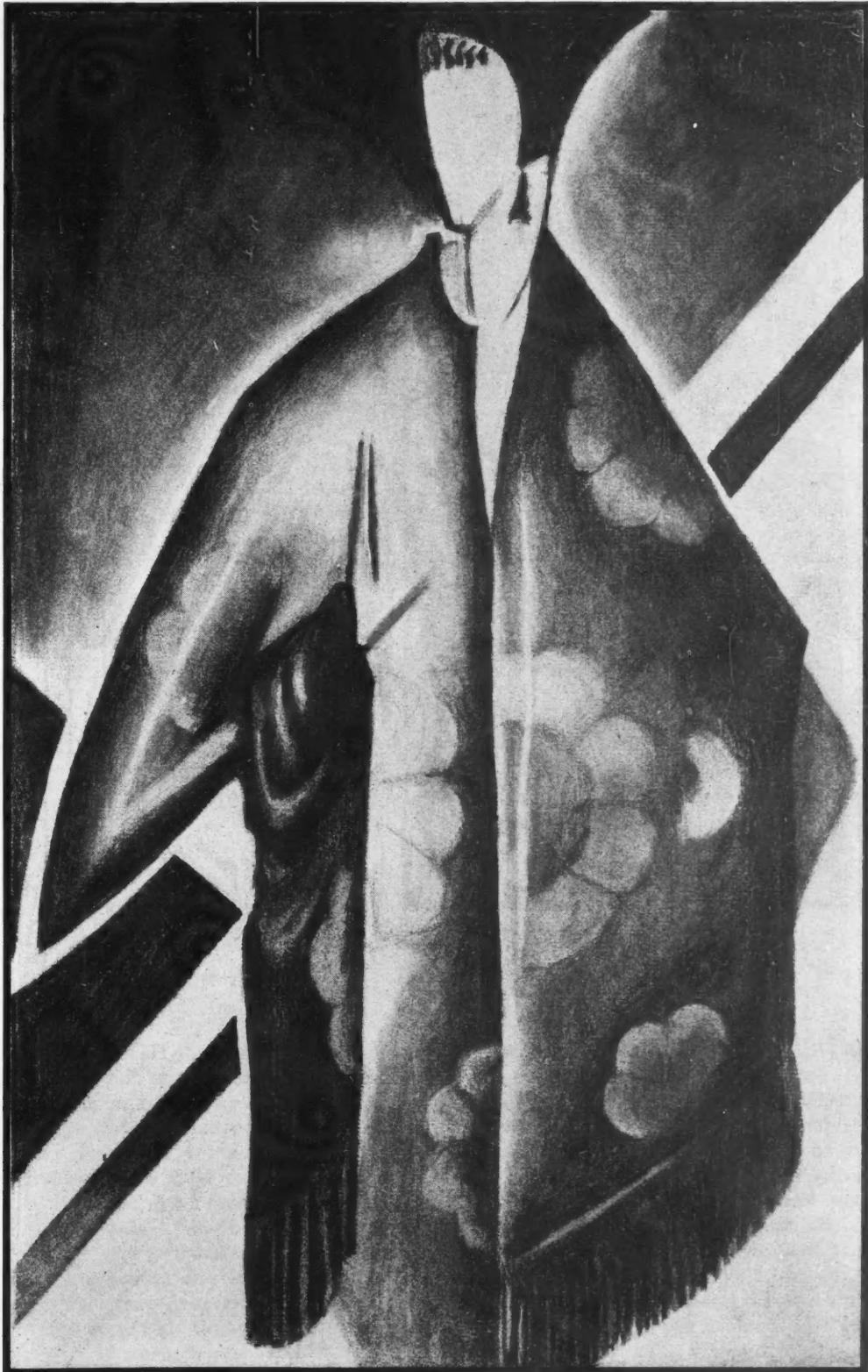


■ Within the given rectangular space the designer here has made a pleasing arrangement of three figures resolved to their very simplest forms with a rhythmic repetition of curved masses moving gracefully through the composition and pleasantly relieved by the few straight lines which echo the long direction of the rectangular frame.

## A COMPOSITION USING THREE FIGURES

BY DORIS HAYES

■ A few straight lines economically used in pleasing relationship serve as a basis for this single figure arrangement. An easily understood placing of forms with gently moving planes and suggested surface pattern are all put together with a very marked feeling of unity.



## A SINGLE DECORATIVE FIGURE COMPOSITION

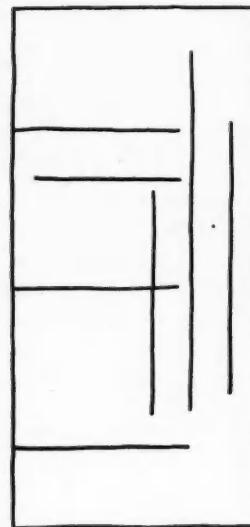
BY DORIS HAYES

# AN ART APPRECIATION PROJECT . . .



"St. Genevieve" By De Chavannes

A study of the line composition in pictures is a most helpful way to arrive at an understanding and real enjoyment of the great masterpieces



A line abstract showing the interesting use of vertical and horizontal lines in the picture composition

■ It is much more direct to approach the problem of real appreciation and understanding of art, through art structure rather than by means of story telling, historical sketches and biography of the artist. While appreciation is an elusive thing, some being born with it and others devoid of it, it is now fully realized that the work of such great teachers as Professor Arthur W. Dow, and some of his followers have done, much in showing how we can easily arrive at an understanding through design or art structure. Lessons in picture study have been given in many places and are still given with an emphasis on the sentimental side of life. Some of the first questions to be discussed in studying a picture are usually: Who is the artist? When did he live? Where did he live? What is the title of the picture? What does it represent? What are the people doing? Such an approach will not do much for an appreciation of what the artist had in mind when he painted the picture. On the contrary it may be diverting the thoughts and feelings of the observer away from the very message the artist had in mind.

A much more significant point of view would be to try to open the observer's mind and soul to what the artist had to say in the painting. To do this we must start by assuming that art is a creative activity on the part of the

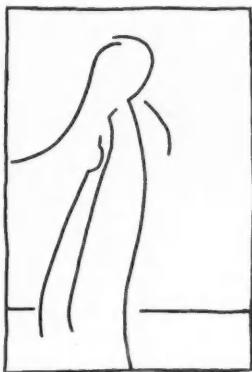
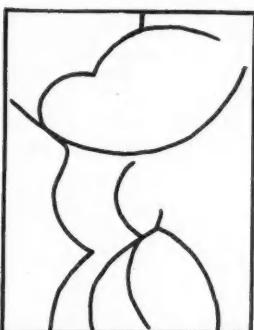
artist. He creates something for us; he has something to give us and this great thing which he has for us is an emotional message. It is a matter of feeling and it is of prime importance for us to be in such a mental state that we can receive this message.

With classes it is well to ask, when coming in contact with a work of art, such questions as: What does this mean to you? What did the artist say to you? What did the artist try to do? While it expecting too much for beginners to arrive at a full significance of a great masterpiece yet such questions puts the student in the right frame of mind. In the picture of St. Genevieve by Puvis de Chavannes, students, even elementary school children readily get the emotional message of dignity, spirituality, poise and security. As soon as the students arrives at this stage of understanding the next step to ask is: How did the artist achieve this feeling? The answer to this question is rather involved but centers around what one have called the elements of design, namely: line, mass, shape or form, dark and light arrangement, and color. Also there enters here the principles of design which are the means of handling the elements to being about unity. In this first lesson we have taken line and noticed how the line arrangement or composition has produced the feeling expressed by the pic-

ture. Line is an elusive factor sometimes extremely difficult to see or to sense. In some cases, as in these pictures reproduced here the main lines are easy to find. In some cases we have what might be called an unseen line, it is a path along which the eye travels through the picture from one point to another. In some cases it might even be gesture, a movement like the growth of a flower, not the contour, but a felling moving through the whole.

In making these line studies or abstracts it is well to make a frame the same proportion as the picture, the same size if practical would help materially. Then select first the dominant line making sure that it is given its full length and its full value in every way. Trifling variations should be ignored. Then secondly, select another line which will

**Below -- "Lavinia" by Titian with a line abstract showing the use of full curved lines in pleasing accord**



**Above--"Pinkie" by Lawrence with a line abstract showing the fine use of graceful free flowing lines**



be subordinate and yet repeats the same direction, perhaps another one or two which will result in a pleasing rhythm of line. To make the whole balance and become a stronger structure it is well to find the opposing line, a line which the artist almost always feels is necessary to make his composition complete. This line adds interest, it is like conflict in a story, the whole is weak without it.

In the three pictures used there is a similarity in subject used for in each case there is a figure of a woman. In the St. Genevieve there the feeling is in strong contrast to the artist daughter by Titian in the physical joyous movement of full curved lines. In "Pinkie" there is the easy flowing youthful light line. The lines illustrate entirely different feelings expressed by the artist.

## SHOULD ART BE NATIONALISTIC?

Continued From Page 58

which the passage from mediocrity to excellence is made, nor are they conscious of our proneness to rest complacently on a relatively low plane, happy in self-commendation. When the mind is keyed to medium stages of advancement, it does not respond readily to the finest achievements. The tendency to be content with what has already been achieved is a dangerous barrier to progress and constitutes a real peril. A determination to be original or nothing, usually results in the latter. The chief weakness in the exclusion principle is that it is wholly negative and shuts out foreign influences without offering any program for action. Many of the professors who warn students against the danger of suffering loss of personality at the hands of foreign instructors forget that the pabulum which they have been dispensing has been obtained largely in Munich or Paris, and during the low ebb of art in the nineteenth century.

The best philosophical opinion makes clear that creative work requires a rich subsoil of experience, a fund of impressions which can function in growth. Advancement takes place most readily when there is a state of continual change, of breaking up and reforming habits, and regarding nothing as final. It is by moving to new vantage points that we become aware of the blindness from which we may be suffering.

It is a common fallacy to believe that one may develop originality best by avoiding influences. The fact is that invention does not come forth miraculously in completed form. Rather it finds its form during periods of action. Throughout all nature, creation is a process of making new combinations of existing elements. A new alphabet is not necessary for creative writing. We are born not so much with a will to create as with capacity to develop a given situation and the more varied and the more flexible the situation is the better is our chance of succeeding. One might quote at length from the best thinkers of our time to substantiate this fact, showing how originality or the expression of self takes place in the course of a process and is not dependent upon the origin of the project.

Serious injustice is often done to the individual student by warnings against foreign study, for he would be led to believe that his personality is a fragile structure to be shielded and guarded, observed and nursed, lest it be crushed by the influence of a foreign artist. The student in such a case would do well to read the words of a famous painter who said that he had never feared influences for the reason that individuality of any consequence is not easily crushed. The student with his attention turned inward has little chance of finding self-expression and he would fare better if he launched into world-wide contacts with faith in the virility of his own personality.

One often hears foreign instruction opposed while at the same time foreign travel for the purpose of observation is favored. This is based, of course, on the fear of personal influence; and while this is not without foundation, its importance has been over-emphasized. It is true that instructors are prone to inject their personalities into the work of students, but if the student gains a command of the fundamentals of his art the benefits far outweigh any harm done in the way of a temporary loss of individuality. The personal influence of instructors cannot ordinarily be accomplished except through instruction.

Independence is certainly to be encouraged but hiding

in one's tent in fear of having the spark of originality snuffed out is a very different matter.

### IV

A confusion between real art influence and choice which is based solely on theory has led to many errors. It is entirely possible that one group may find, in the work of another, certain elements which may be absorbed and assimilated and made a part of genuine self-expression, but a decision to take over foreign qualities, or on the other hand to avoid them, because of some fixed doctrine, has little chance of success. There must be a real affinity on an aesthetic basis or no valid influence can take place. The pre-Raphaelite brotherhood with all its determination to magnify the importance of subject, and supported as it was by Ruskin's logic, could not long resist the tide of Impressionism which at that time seemed to its critics to be hopelessly irrational. Monet and Manet, the founders of Impressionism, had proceeded more wisely in going to England and finding there the beginnings of a style which was to become a perfect medium for their own self-expression.

Real art influence is like the effect of one chemical element on another and it cannot be brought about through policies concocted by social theorists. It is a thousand times better to allow such matters to take their own course than to attempt to discipline artists by means of theoretical panaceas. The most harmful influence on artists is that kind which comes from those who cry out most loudly against foreign contacts, for the reason that such admonitions are based on a type of experience and reasoning which lies outside the field of art. It is the influence of false prophets that we are to fear and not that of foreign styles. If theorists set up a goal which contradicts the inner urge of artists, how shall such a goal be attained? The machinery of the artist's faculties must function normally to be creative. We cannot hope to run the motor backward with any success. No one, of course, would deny the rightful place of art criticism, or the discussion of social usefulness of various kinds of art, but the laying out of programs for the creative artists is too subtle and too important to be disposed of in the summary manner in which it is frequently treated.

In public school education the distinction between the setting up of a situation favorable to normal growth on the one hand, and the interposing of logical standards on the other, has been recognized slowly, and in the fine arts the development of natural tendencies has been achieved at the cost of revolution and great individual sacrifice. Heretofore educators have attempted to fix the order of learning for children expecting the child's mind to function in conformity to it, only to discover by experience that the natural process of learning cannot be successfully changed. The common belief that one learns more out of school than in it has referred not only to the program of general education but also to the training of painters. If this is true it is because the schools have violated the natural order of development.

Advance theories on how to develop a style of art are not to be trusted. New types usually appear before they are explained, a case in point being the work of the great impressionist Renoir, who was surprised by the large amount of argumentation that was brought to the support of his manner of painting after his work was recognized. The many other similar instances which could be cited should remind us of the evil that may come from any intervention in the association of students with foreign schools

of art merely because such association seems to violate a preconceived policy.

V

Just how much time we should spend in nursing our American style of art is a question of considerable moment. It is true that we have been criticised abroad for lack of originality and it is also true that great schools of art in the past have generally been characterized by rather distinctive styles as witness the Dutch or the Spanish. The styles have moreover been expressive of the temper and habits of the people. These facts have been of great interest to historians and critics and by habit of mind, we attach much importance to such matters. In France there has been some concern of late as to the stability of the French tradition. It has been suggested that perhaps the true type of French art is being submerged by the great tide of strangers in Paris. But an optimistic patriot writes that the genius of French art still lives and permeates the great body of multitudinous styles and vagaries that seem to flourish in more obvious fashion.

That the welfare of so great a tradition as that of the French should arouse some solicitous concern is not surprising and the present-day leaders of that school have expressed a desire to perpetuate its traditions. Our own case, however, is of a different nature. That a style in its inception should receive any conscious attention is not clear. It may probably be as well to allow it to take care of itself. In any case a national style is of no particular artistic importance. One admires the work of Rembrandt, not for its consistency with Dutch traditions, but for its own magnificence. The growth of any national style is of interest but not of vital importance.

However seriously one may be concerned with the creation of a distinctive kind of art, the widening of our horizon should be our constant aim. The American style will not be found necessarily by searching in Mammoth Cave or at the foot of Niagara any more than French art was discovered on the bank of the Seine. Corot's pictures of the Coliseum are no less French than those he made of Chartres. Had he painted Pike's Peak it still would have been a French painting even though Thomas Moran had coached him. Likewise, the painting of Rubens had not become any less Flemish because his color was enriched after a visit to Italy.

The young artist who studies abroad will not find his personality ready made there any more than he will find it at home, and if he is wise, he will not be much concerned about losing it in either place. What he goes abroad to get is partly a technical equipment which will be suited to his own purpose, and partly a background of experience against which his individuality can develop. So long as he does not

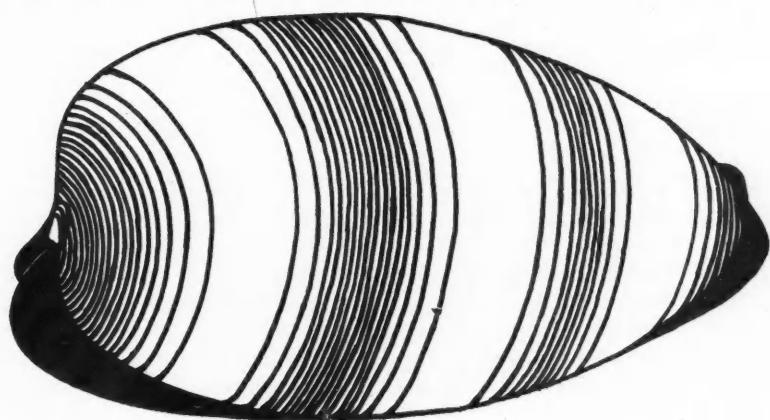
willfully annex characteristics through imitation, the more varied his contacts are the better. Much experience and not the lack of it is what makes originality possible. As to whether the student can find the necessary technical equipment abroad better than at home may be an open question, and it may depend upon the individual case but in any event the student should not be discouraged in searching for it in any quarter.

To perpetuate racial and national tradition in art is to many people a matter of much concern, but it is far more urgent that a spirit of unrestricted searching for the excellent be maintained. One may deplore the influence of one style of art on that of another, but the free growth of the student's art interests should not be thwarted for the sake of nationalistic style. The instincts of the artists are better guides in such matters than the logic of patriots. In order to know what kind of art Japan should practice today, we must appeal to the senses of the Japanese artist. He alone is in a position to have an opinion. If he has no desire to make Kakemonas of the fifteen century manner, there is no good reason why he should not search in any part of the globe possible for the technical knowledge which will meet his needs. If he finds it in Tokyo, so much the better, but if not, then he may do well to look in New York or Paris, and Tokyo will in the long run be the richer for it.

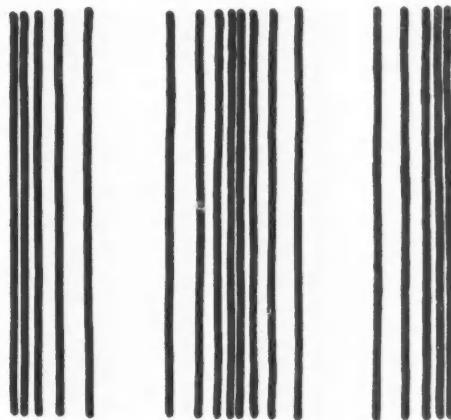
Originality like the proverbial kettle fares better if it is unwatched, and likewise it may be that national style in art is best when it is not of the hothouse variety.

In view of modern travel and communication it would be difficult to prophesy the future of national styles in art. Worldwise knowledge is extant. The Congo artist no longer works unmolested in the atmosphere of his ancestors, and it is difficult to see how the New Yorker can hope to seclude himself in a water-tight American compartment, to turn out a pure brand of Knickerbocker Art. International boundaries are becoming more and more indistinct. Blood alone tells and will continue to do so.

The rapidity with which American art is improving is enough to establish confidence in the methods that are being followed by our students. National interchange in the matter of art study is having a healthful effect, and it is to be hoped that it will continue. As far as an American style is concerned, until it is able to stand on its own legs it will be useless to try to prop it up by circumscribing our students in a limited field of study, whether that study be by travel and observation or under formal instruction. Granting that national styles are of interest the best guide for any activity in their behalf is the art sense of the student and any effort however well intended which interferes with the free play of that sense will in the long run be detrimental.



FOR JULY-AUGUST



A textile design by Dorothy Pammet inspired by work of primitive peoples

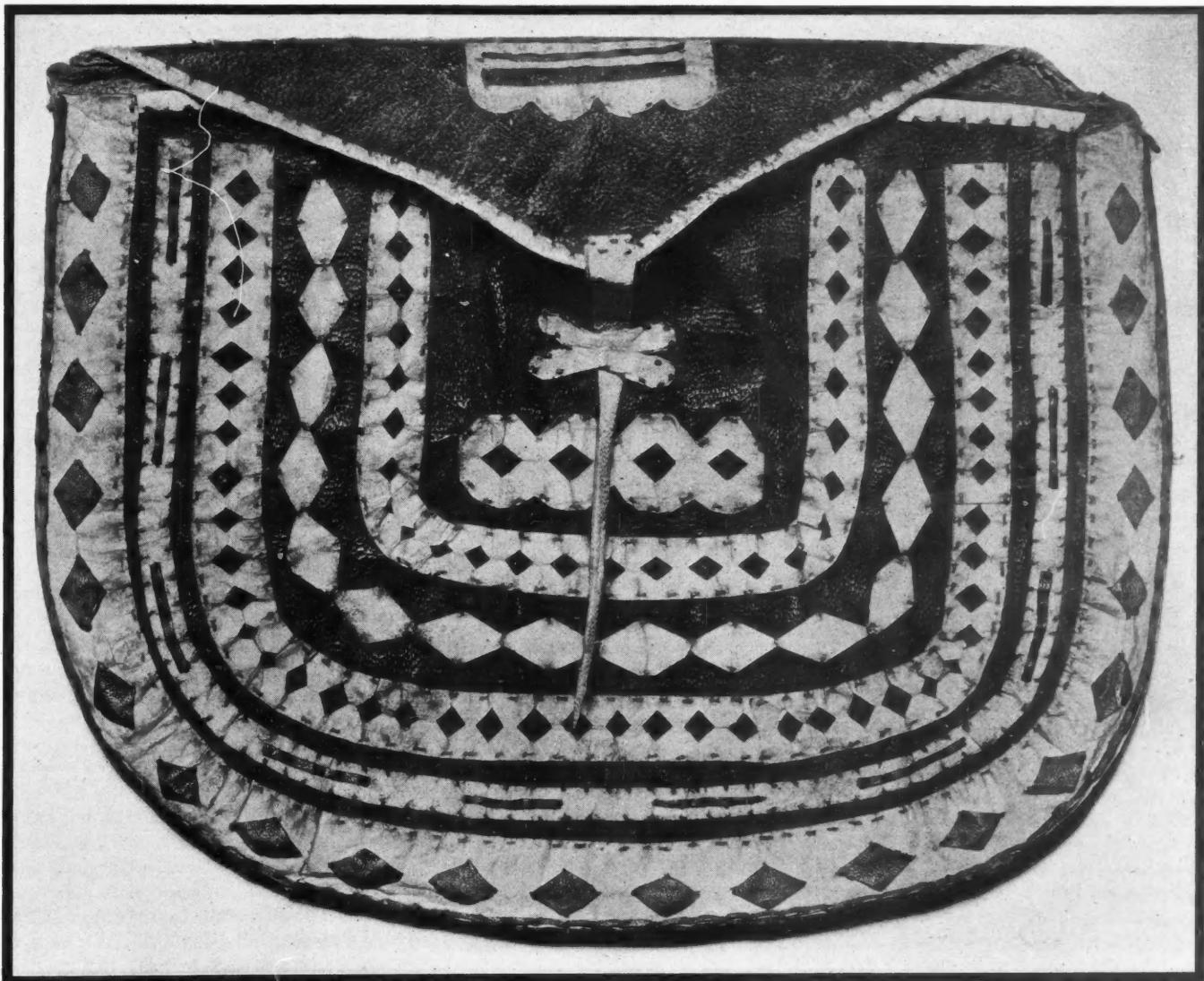


By Helen Rhodes

■ How much pleasure the Primitive Artist must have experienced in the combination of simple lines and masses of dark and light. A spirit of play and adventure as well as a keen feeling for good spacing often permeates the designs of bark-cloth pattern and the dark South African who meets, with his primitive conveyance, the tourist on the in coming steamers at Capetown often has his back and arms covered with a painted tattoo of these same finely arranged geometric or semi-abstract units.

The University student who designed the all-over pattern on this page was stimulated by the primitive patterns which

had been studied in the Campus Museum and she has used animal forms, which the primitive man sometimes used, and also geometric figures, which form so frequently the basis of African and Hawaiian textile pattern. This student has worked for strong dark spaces with small amounts of light opposed to strong light spaces with small amounts of dark. Many such patterns produced by ingenious college freshmen should give ideas to textile manufacturers and perhaps some time our great textile industry will recognize this unusual reservoir of creative energy, even as Poiret, in France has recognized the commercial value of design done by talented French children.



## AN INDIAN PURSE

BY HELEN RHODES

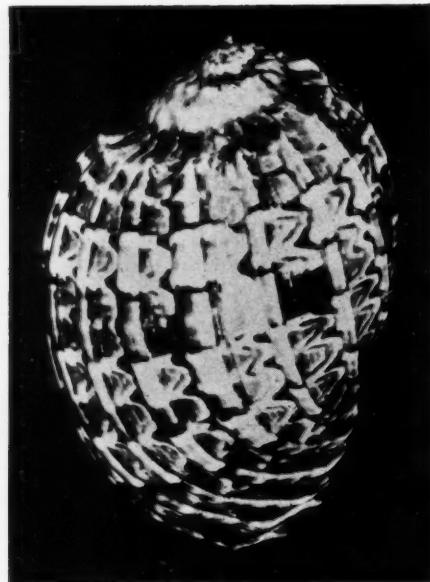
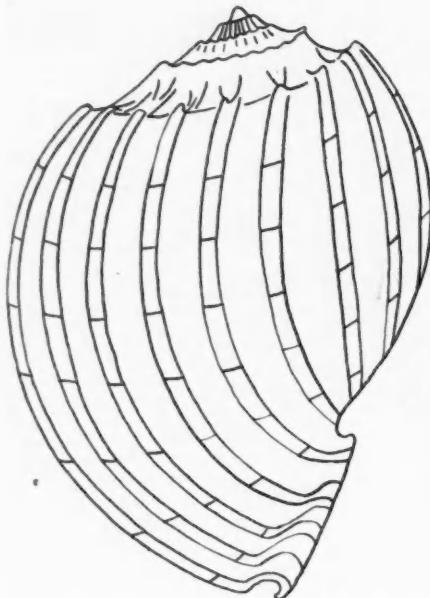
■ This attractive Indian purse, made out of leather and cedar bark, is the handwork of a Northwest Indian woman and is characteristic of the way in which the Indian craftsmen carried over the type of decorative design applied by necessity in their basket weaving to their other crafts, such as leather, pottery and wood-carving. This little bag is a very simple example of the application of several of the basic laws of design, which, when analyzed in an Indian bag or a negro wood-carving, become more easily appreciable in the Fine Arts.

The law of *rhythm* is present in this bag through the repetition of border units and *variation* is also shown in these in both unit form and width, no two borders having the same width. The purse has *subordination* of small border masses to the large central dark mass at the top and it has *opposition* in the opposing line of the fastening.

Just why this Indian woman worker and her co-workers in the Indian village were able to create even the simplest design in conformity to the great basic laws of good design is a question which art students often ask. The student in

our art-structure classes might apply himself for many months to exercises in spacing and study of the art of the past without being able to create anything so complete and perfect in its way as this simple two-value pattern.

To be sure, the anthropologist tells us that there were but few Indians in a village who had this gift of creation but this fact does not altogether answer the query why we have so much fine space relation, so clear a conformity to the principles of harmony, in the works of primitive people who made no business of acquiring appreciation and skill in a classroom as we do. Was it because of that closer contact with the simple, strong contrasts and rhythms of nature that they possessed this fine feeling? Was it the peculiar advantages accompanying the simple life of primitive people which made them understanding of some of the great basic laws of harmony which govern the universe? Whatever it was, we are indebted to these primitive people for many beautiful works of art and craft in our Museums, works which continue to stand as inspiring examples for students of art-structure.



#### Analytic study of shells as an appreciation activity in design

■ Careful drawing made from the many varieties of shells offers the artist innumerable patterns, motifs and rhythmic arrangements of line from which he can find

stimuli when doing creative work. In the illustrations above we have at the left a line drawing made from the museum specimen photographed in the center. From the drawing the dominant line movement was selected and emphasized with an opposing direction formed by the closure line of open spaces.

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## HELPFUL BOOKS FOR TEACHERS

The Bridgman Art Library of Great Artists, fully illustrated. Bridgman Publishers.

A series of popular priced, attractively arranged, colorfully bound books dealing with the lives and work of the great masters. Each book takes one artist and the list includes such men as Durer, Michelangelo, Holbein, Titian, DaVinci, Rembrandt, Del Sarto, Giotto, Velasquez, Tintoretto, Van Dyck and Raphael. With the heavy demand for practical illustrations and text will give the student artist or layman a real acquaintance with the world's greatest artists.

Bulletin No. 360 by Hewitt Wilson. Published by The Denver Fire Clay Co.

This bulletin, Keramic Kilns, is a practical presentation of the subject of elementary ceramics and should be a valuable help to beginners in this field. It contains well selected and logically arranged illustrations and takes up such problems as preparation of clay for pottery work, shaping, casting, glazes, glazing, firing as well as the construction and use of the kiln.

High Lights in Architecture by Edith Long Thurston, published by Bridgman Publishers.

A book any designer will pick up with interest. The text, with its single stroke titles, is printed in large type, very beautifully related to the illustrations. These illustrations are very clear diagrammatical drawings which, like good caricatures, seem much more "life-like" than photographs. The book is an analytical summary of many of the architectural periods and if no question is raised by the reader as to the validity of the epigrammatical statements, is distinguished for the remarkable sympathy between the character of the text and the symbolic effect of the illustrations. It cannot fail to be helpful to the student in impressing upon his mind the chief points of our architectural tradition. However, most people would take issue with statement, "while the achievement of the Egyptians is amazing we find no evidence of an aesthetic sense."—Alice Robinson.